

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MANILA 01143 230912Z

ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 HA-05 /064 W

-----106328 231010Z /21

R 230841Z JAN 78

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 683

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 1143

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SHUM, RP

SUBJECT: SALONGA SAYS OPPOSITION WILL RUN IN BATASAN

REF: (A) MANILA 859; (B) STATE 014669

1. EX-SENATOR SALONGA TOLD EMBOFF JANUARY 21 THAT HIS "GROUP" HAD DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE IN APRIL 2 ELECTIONS FOR INTERIM BATASANG PAMBANSA. DECISION HAS NOT BEEN PUBLICIZED AND IS SUBJECT TO REVIEW FOLLOWING PROMULGATION OF FINAL VERSION OF ELECTIONS RULES BY BATASAN BAYAN NEXT WEEKEND. GROUP IS CURRENTLY DECIDING WHETHER TO CALL ITSELF "UNITED OPPOSITION" OR "OPPOSITION FRONT."

2. SALONGA SAID GROUP WOULD CONCENTRATE ITS CAMPAIGN ATTACKS ONE (1) GRANT, CORRUPTION, AND ACQUISITION OF WEALTH BY MARCOS REGIME; (2) RAPIDLY RISING PRICES VS. SLOWLY RISING WAGES; AND (3) TORTURE AND ARBITRARY DETENTION. GROUP WILL NOT FOCUS ON US-RP MILITARY BASES NEGOTIATIONS BECAUSE, HE SAID, THE AVERAGE VOTER DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE ISSUE AND IS NOT INTERESTED IN IT.

3. SALONGA SAID HIS GROUP WOULD PROBABLY RUN A FULL SLATE OF 19 CANDIDATES IN METRO-MANILA. HE INDICATED, WITHOUT QUITE SAYING SO, THAT HE WILL RUN IN METRO-MANILA  
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PAGE 02 MANILA 01143 230912Z

HIMSELF, SINCE HIS HOME PROVINCE OF LAGUNA "HAS BEEN MOSTLY ABSORBED INTO MANILA ANYWAY." HE ALSO SAID HE IS SUPPORTING THE CANDIDACY OF TONDO SLUM LEADER TRINIDAD HERRERA, "ALTHOUGH SHE IS NOT WELL KNOWN OUTSIDE TONDO." METRO-MANILA SLATE WILL ALSO CONTAIN LABOR LEADERS AND "AT LEAST ONE RELIGIOUS."

4. SALONGA SAID THAT NONE OF THE FORMER SENATORS HAS YET DECIDED IRREVOCABLY TO RUN "EXCEPT FOR AQUINO." HE SAID HE RECEIVED A LETTER FROM AQUINO WITHIN THE PAST WEEK OUTLINING HIS STRATEGY. AN UNPUBLICIZED PRESIDENTIAL DECREE, HE SAID, PROHIBITS DETAINEES FROM VOTING OR RUNNING FOR OFFICE. ONE THE ELECTORAL PROCEDURES ARE SET, AQUINO WILL CONTEST THIS DECREE IN THE SUPREME COURT. THE GOVERNMENT WILL THEN HAVE TO DECIDE ON ALLOWING AQUINO TO RUN VS. "MAKING IT OBVIOUS" THAT HE WAS DETAINED TO PREVENT HIS POLITICAL ASCENDANCY. (COMMENT: WEEKEND PRESS REPORTS PUBLICIZED THE DECREE NO. 1052 OF NOVEMBER 1976, AND INDICATED THE GOP IS CONSIDERING DROPPING IT. ELECTION COMMISSION CHAIRMAN PEREZ, SUPREME COURT JUSTICE BARREDO, AND EX-SENATOR TOLENTINO ALL PUBLICLY OPPOSED THE DECREE. END COMMENT,) AQUINO WILL RUN IN CENTRAL LUZON, SALONGA SAID, BECAUSE, "HIS PEOPLE IN TARLAC WOULD NEVER FORGIVE HIM IF HE ABANDONED THEM TO RUN IN MANILA."

5. SALONGA ADDED THAT AN OPEN LETTER HE DRAFTED TO THE PRESIDENT IS BEING CIRCULATED FOR SIGNATURES AT THE MOMENT. THE LETTER CONTAINS A LIST OF SIX DEMANDS, BUT HE EMPHASIZED THAT THESE ARE BARGAINING POINTS RATHER THAN PRECONDITIONS TO PARTICIPATION. HE NOTED WITH A SMILE THAT THE GOP HAS ALREADY GIVEN GROUND ON TWO OF THE POINTS: EXTENDING THE CAMPAIGN PERIOD, AND CALLING CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MANILA 01143 230912Z

HEARINGS TO CONSIDER RECOGNIZING THE LIBERAL PARTY IN THE ELECTIONS.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**TAGS:** PINT, SHUM, RP  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
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